

and it's scary and comforting and warm and complicated  
the way they bicker with each other,  
but will close ranks the instant an enemy,  
personal or impersonal, should threaten.

you have to share your life, though, with a sibling.  
not just attention and support and time,  
but most of all importance.  
your self-importance is never absolute.  
i guess you can see what being an only child does to you,  
because i'm glad now that i never had a brother.

i do belong to the American Federation of Labor!

i'm sitting in the tavern  
with some of my fellow sports fans,  
all of whom are laborers,  
and someone complains that there's nothing  
to bet on in the spring  
(except for suckering an occasional greenhorn  
into a wager on the superstars competition)

and i say, without thinking, "at least it's a good time  
to get a little work done,"

and Old Jim snorts, "work! you've never done  
an honest day's work, Locklin, in your goddamn life!"

which isn't the literal truth,  
but, as the guffaws chorus and swell,  
i decide this is neither the time nor place  
to discourse upon  
the spiritual travail of the artist.

-- Gerald Locklin

Long Beach CA

WR: 9, 21, 27/28, 31ss, 33, 35,  
37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47,  
50ss, 53, 56, 60, 61, 64ss, 67cb,  
70, 72, 73, 74, 76ss, 77, 78, 80